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NEWS

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Central Illinois native assumes command of CNET

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Returning to the “Cradle of Naval Aviation,” where his flight training began nearly 30 years ago, Vice Adm. Alfred G. Harms Jr., assumed the duties as the 17th Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET) during a change of command ceremony held today at the National Museum of Naval Aviation onboard Naval Air Station Pensacola.

In his remarks, Harms reflected on the importance of the CNET mission and how it affects Sailors and their families.

“ We are the harbinger of hope, the gateway to personal and professional growth, and the key to success for all of the dedicated young men and women who choose to serve their country as members of the United States Navy. What an awesome responsibility we have, and what an awesome opportunity we have to positively impact the country and the lives of so many wonderful young patriots,” commented Harms.

The guest speaker, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark, praised Harms as the right man to “continue the task of taking Navy education and training into the 21st century.”

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Harms was designated as a naval flight officer in 1972 and trained in the A-6 Intruder aircraft. The central Illinois native's operational tours include two Western Pacific deployments with Attack Squadron (VA) 145 onboard the USS RANGER (CV 61), Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean deployments with VA 176 onboard the USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62), and as the executive officer onboard the USS ENTERPRISE (CV 65).

His command experience includes tours as commanding officer of VA 75, commanding officer of both the USS SHREVEPORT (LPD 12) and USS NIMITZ (CVN 68), and commander of the USS CARL VINSON Battle Group during combat operations in support of Operations Desert Fox and Southern Watch.

Shore and staff assignments for the University of Illinois graduate include Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps instructor at Texas A&M University, student at the Naval Test Pilot School and NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy, deputy director of Operations at U.S. Central Command, deputy commander-in-chief and chief of staff for U.S. Pacific Fleet, and the director, Assessment Division (N81), Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, prior to taking command of CNET.

In closing, Harms further commented on the responsibilities of education and training in the future.

“As we face the threats of the 21st century, ranging from the ‘war for talent’ to the ‘war on terrorism,’ said Harms, “I am convinced that our key to victory will depend on our ability to effectively train and educate our people across a broad spectrum.”

Harms' awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (four awards), the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (two awards).